



FA CUP FIRST ROUND PREVIEW

If you're
going
by car!

THREE coachloads of Wycombe fans will be making the long journey to Kent to support their side in the FA Cup. But many will also be going by car.

There are numerous routes to Maidstone but the road they must all take is the A.20 out of London. Follow the signposts to Maidstone along both the A.20 and M.20. Then leave the M20 at the sign saying Maidstone west.

Then travel for two miles along the A.20, following the signs for the Town Centre, and the stadium ground is on the left and should be quite visible from the main road.

New lights

AMERSHAM Town mark the installation of their new floodlights with a tough match at home to Farnborough Town, of the Isthmian League Division Two, in the second round of the FA Vase tomorrow (Saturday).

With the new lights in operation, the match will begin at 3 pm and Magpies will be hoping to crown the event with a victory.

Burnham, who were exempt until this stage, travel to Berkhamsted Town of the London Spartan League.

Blues' chance to answer their Cup critics

WHEN Wycombe Wanderers received exemption until the first round of this season's FA Cup there were howls of protest from other non-league sides that they had been given undeserved favourable treatment.

The critics pointed to Wycombe's first round knock-out by Minehead last year and said they should have had to pre-qualify. What those people forgot was the Blues' tremendous competition record in the previous four years.

It is up to the current Wycombe team to remind the critics of past glories with a convincing performance away to Maidstone in the first round proper tomorrow.

A victory over Maidstone would not only give Wycombe a chance to hit the headlines again but would also bring back some of the supporters who have stopped coming to Loakes Park during the past two months.

Support has slipped considerably this season and it's not surprising, for Wycombe are currently having their worst season for ten years.

EIGHTH

After a bright start, they have slipped down the table to eighth, due in part to injuries and also occasionally due to a lack of 100 per cent effort by the players.

You only had to watch the Crystal Palace match to see how Wycombe rose to the occasion to give their best performance of the season. Players just gave that little bit extra.

I hope they can find that spark of inspiration again tomorrow, otherwise Blues' fans could be drowning their sorrows by 5 pm.

Three or four years ago Southern League clubs held no terrors for the likes of Wycombe and Leatherhead. But this season, apart from a few notable exceptions, the results between clubs from the Southern and Isthmian Leagues have been going the former's way.

And make no mistake, Maidstone are one of the best of the Premier Division sides and currently stand in sixth spot. Their recent form has not been great but they are full of ex-

MICHAEL KNOX assesses Wycombe's chances at Maidstone

perienced players, who will stand no nonsense.

When the draw was made, the first local reaction was, "Oh no! Not away again." But after recent Wycombe matches, I'm not so sure that is a bad thing.

The Blues cannot seem to win at home at the moment and have been performing better away from Loakes Park, where the pressure is off them. They are unbeaten away for the past seven games, including two friendlies.

I expect them to field the side that has played the last two matches, with Keith Mead partnering Alan Phillips at the centre of the back and Steve Hardwick just in front of them in midfield.

With their current resources, that is the best Wycombe combination although I have my reservations about Hardwick in midfield — unfamiliar territory for him.

Maidstone manager Barry Watling watched Tuesday

night's match against Staines and admired some of the attacking play but saw some gleam of hope for his forwards against the Wycombe defence, which did not impress him.

The Kent club hope to be at full strength for the tie. Their only doubt concerns former Gillingham defender Kenny Hill. He missed the second half of Saturday's game at Dorchester after having five stitches in a deep gash above his right eye.

Hill trained with the rest of the side on Tuesday and is hoping to play with the stitches still in. If he does not make it, 20-year-old John Hutton will replace him in the back four.

'Stones', who drew 0-0 at Dorchester, may make a change in midfield. Former Gravesend player Norman Fusco, who went on as a second-half substitute, played so well that he could replace Kenny Wallace.

Since losing at home to Telford on October 14, Maid-

stone have gone seven league and cup games without defeat. They play a 4-3-3 formation and six of the last eight goals have been scored by Glenn Coupland, recently the target of a £3,000 bid by Margate.

It all adds up to a stiff task for Wycombe, whose best hope may be to hold out for a draw and bring back the match to Loakes Park on Tuesday.

BERGER ISTHMIAN LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION (21 November 1978)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Enfield	23	15	3	5	41	20	48
L'Hernehead	22	12	3	7	38	21	39
Hendon	23	10	7	6	34	30	37
Dulwich	18	10	6	2	34	13	36
Croydon	20	10	6	4	31	17	36
Dagenham	21	11	3	7	37	32	36
Barking	17	10	4	3	41	27	34
Wycombe	22	9	7	6	32	22	34
Wals'tow	21	10	3	8	32	24	33
Slough	18	9	4	5	21	14	31
Woking	18	8	5	5	32	26	29
Tooting	24	7	8	9	28	31	29
Boreham Wd	20	8	4	8	25	29	28
Hitchin	20	8	4	8	27	33	28
Staines	23	4	10	9	27	38	22
Tilbury	19	6	4	9	29	42	22
Carl'ton	21	4	9	8	30	34	21
Sutton	21	5	5	11	23	29	20
Hayes	21	3	9	9	20	33	18
Oxford	20	5	3	12	22	44	18
Kingston	19	2	5	12	17	36	11
L'stone	17	1	2	14	11	36	5

Wanderers recd after early sho

Wycombe Wanderers 1, Staines Town 1

WYCOMBE Wanderers overcame the shock of conceding a goal in the first minute to fight back and secure a draw against Staines Town in their Berger Isthmian League match at Loakes Park on Tuesday night.

The Staines goal came after only 48 seconds and provided a sweet moment for defender Rob Williams who netted the goal against the team his elder brother Andy now manages.

The Wycombe defence was caught cold by a high ball into

Rob's namesake, but no relation, Jester Williams, a tall coloured striker had a golden chance to put Staines further ahead when he broke clear of the Wycombe cover. But Maskell was quick off his line to narrow the angle and Williams shot well wide.

This was a great escape for Wanderers, who then began to play some of their best football of the season for the half hour before the interval.

The improved form was part explained by the fact that for

Kennedy, who was having one of his most effective games.

The pressure intensified just before the break with a series of extraordinary incidents in the Staines goalmouth. With a bit of luck Blues could have scored three times but they had to settle for the one.

Kennedy's close range shot evaded Yates but was cleared off the line for a corner. From the corner Steve Long's inswinging kick hit the far post and was somehow cleared.

Then following a cross from